

REMARKS

The undersigned counsel for the Applicants is not listed on the Applicants' Power of Attorney. However, a new and revised Power of Attorney will be filed in the near future. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the United States Patent Office accept this amendment under 37 CFR 1.33(b)(2) and 1.34.

With the present amendment, claims 2, 3, 6-9, 11, 12, and 14-25 are pending. Claims 1, 4, 5, 10, 18, 19, 22, and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Varona et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,673,980 B1).

Claims 14-17 have been allowed.

Claims 2, 3, 6-9, 11, 12, 20, 21, 24, and 25 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 2, 6, 8, 11, and 12 have been rewritten into independent form and are thus now allowable. Respectfully, claim 3 depends from claim 2, claim 7 depends from claim 6, and claim 9 depends from claim 8, therefore claims 3, 7, and 9 are also allowable.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 18, 19, 22, and 23 patentably define over the art of record for at least the reasons set forth herein.

Respectfully, Varona et al. does not provide a method for producing a creped nonwoven web containing thermoplastic fibers wherein the thermoplastic fibers comprise a blend of a thermoplastic polymer and an adhesive additive.

Varona et al. discloses the use of adhesive bonding materials that are coated, meltblown, meltsprayed, dripped, or splattered onto the side of the nonwoven web so that, when the nonwoven web contacts the drum, the

nonwoven web adheres thereto. A creping blade can then remove the nonwoven fabric from the drum, thereby creping the nonwoven web.

Claim 18 clearly calls for the adhesive nonwoven fibrous web to be comprised of thermoplastic fibers that include a blend of a thermoplastic polymer and an adhesive additive. The adhesive additive is mixed with the thermoplastic polymer before the thermoplastic polymer is spun into a fiber or filament. The fibers themselves are used to adhere the adhesive nonwoven fibrous web to the first roll before the nonwoven fibrous web is removed from the roll by a creping blade. As discussed on page 19, line 16 through page 22, line 5, the method for producing a creped nonwoven web as claimed in claim 18 does not require the application of an adhesive to the nonwoven or the creping roll due to the qualities of the adhesive additive that is blended with the thermoplastic polymer. The method called for in claim 18 does not call for an external hot melt adhesive to be placed on the creping roll or the nonwoven web (See page 21, lines 23-25).

As stated above, Varona et al. only describes the use of a bonding adhesive that is required to be placed on the nonwoven web. Varona et al. does not disclose an adhesive additive to be blended with the thermoplastic polymer to create the fibers within the nonwoven fibrous web, and thus cannot disclose use of such an adhesive additive to adhere the nonwoven web to a first roll.

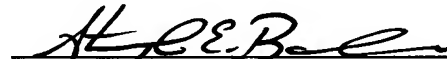
Therefore, Varona et al. cannot anticipate claim 18.

For at least the reasons set forth above, independent claim 18 is patentably distinguishable from the cited prior art and is now allowable. Since claims 19-25 depend from claim 18, Applicants respectfully submit that claims

19-25 are also allowable. As set forth above, claims 2, 6, 8, 11, and 12 have been rewritten into independent form and are now allowable. Since claim 3 depends from claim 2, claim 7 depends from claim 6, and claim 9 depends from claim 8, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 3, 7, and 9 are also allowable. As stated above, claims 14-17 have been allowed. Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance and favorable action thereon is requested. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at his convenience to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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